

Suffield Police Commission

Minutes of the Regular Meeting, May 21, 2008

The regular meeting of the Suffield Police Commission was held on Wednesday, May 21, 2008 at Suffield Police Headquarters, 911 Mountain Road, Suffield, Ct.

Present were: Chairman Don Miner, Commissioners Jack Quinn, Linda Stevenson, Matt Joyal, Peter Hill and John Zavisza. Also present were Chief Michael Manzi, Capt. David Bourque, and Recording Secretary Karen McKown. Officer Osowiecki was present for the K-9 discussion.

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chairman Miner.

CORRESPONDENCE: The only correspondence was the monthly meeting announcement from the Police Commissioners Association of Connecticut.

PUBLIC INPUT: Mr. Zavisza mentioned that he saw the Enfield Police doing a “seat belt check” today. The Chief said it was part of the State of Ct., Click it or Ticket campaign.

MINUTES OF APRIL, 2008 MEETING: Mr. Zavisza mentioned that the new “abbreviated” minutes do not offer much information for a person who was not present for the meetings. Mr. Miner said he felt the minutes were a lot more readable in the newer format. **Mr. Quinn motioned to accept the minutes** as presented. Mr. Hill seconded and the motion carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

BUDGET AND FINANCE – Capt Bourque reported that:

- At this time in the fiscal year, the budget is being carefully watched
- Accumulated holiday time was being used up before it was lost to the officers
- The diesel fuel issue has been resolved, but there has been no reimbursement to that line item.
- Gasoline usage is back to “normal”, but due to the raise in fuel cost, that item will be overspent.
- The bottom line for “expenses” should be OK.
- Payroll is where it should be.
- The D.W.I. check point will begin this Memorial Day weekend.
- Training costs are up, due to extended time at the range, and Officer Burrell’s accident reconstruction training
- Vehicle R&M is overspent. In next year’s budget, R&M should be way down, due to the purchase of new cruisers.
- Sergeant Brown has requested bids from local dealers for cruiser repair. He has received 1 answer back, and is looking into it for a cost savings in the new fiscal year.

DETECTIVE BUREAU - Chief Manzi said a lot of Detective Sargent’s time in April, was spent in firearms training. It was noted that Detective Sargent has been responding to a few more calls to back up patrol officers, such as a recent motorcycle accident, where he blocked off a part of the roadway, and took statements from witnesses.

K-9: Officer Osowiecki reported that he has begun training a new dog, to replace K-9 Phil who will soon be “retiring, due to advancing age”. The new dog is a 14 month old Dutch Shepard named “Z”. The dog has started basic obedience and some tracking. Z was rescued from a dog pound in Mass, where she was nearly euthanized.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER – Chief Manzi said School Resource Officer Antrum has been very busy this past month. He was invited to attend a Board of Education meeting recently. Chief Manzi said the principal of the high school indicated at this meeting, that the Chief of Police had given him discretion to use in the school when it comes to criminal activity. The Chief said the statement was partially accurate, but not the way it was presented to the B.O.E. Chief Manzi said, for example, if there was a pushing and shoving match in the school hall, it could be handled internally, without police intervention. However, when it comes to drugs, the Chief said there is absolutely no discretion. There is a zero-tolerance policy for drugs and alcohol in effect in the schools, and the police will be involved, and arrests might be made. The Chief felt the principal lead the board to believe the teachers still had desecration with the handling of drugs and/or alcohol.

Capt. Bourque briefly spoke about the B.O.E. meeting that Officer Antrum attended. A member of the board commented to Capt. Bourque that Officer Antrum’s presence was valuable, and he was very well received.

The Chief briefly spoke about an incident that occurred approximately two years ago that resulted in the arrest of a high school age male. The issue was whether police are required to notify the school superintendent if a child living in town, who is home schooled, is arrested. Chief Manzi said the school must be notified.

EVALUATION – None presented.

ACTIVITY REPORT – There was consensus that the format for the activity report was where the commission wanted it. Unfortunately, the number of fatal accidents for this year will show a marked increase. There have been 3 motor vehicle fatalities thus far in this fiscal year.

Mr. Quinn motioned to accept the department reports as presented, seconded by Ms. Stevenson. The motion passed by unanimous approved.

CHIEF’S REPORT –

The Chief reported that

- Someone reported a car abandoned in a field that looked to have bullet holes in it. Though the holes were proven to not be bullet holes, but the vehicle itself was determined to have been stolen out of Springfield and abandoned in Suffield. There are no known other crimes relating to this abandonment.
- A new method of sending “old gold” through the mail and receiving payment in return, also through the mail, appears to be the new way to by pass pawn shops and the records pawn shops must keep, when thieves and burglars are trying to dispose of stolen jewelry. Hopefully there will be new legislation to bypass this.

- The Chief briefly talked about a recent pedestrian fatality, as well as just completed firearms training.
- Officer Trovato is returning briefly to active duty with the Air Force and will be gone for 3 months. There are contract issues regarding minimum staffing with Officer Trovato's absence. This will be a financial "hit" for the department.
- The two new recruits won't be on their own on patrol until after the first of next year.
- Supernumerary officers are having a hard time finding recertification training that fits into their schedules. Some are required to take vacation time from their regular jobs.
- Explained the difficulty of putting a part time officer on as temporary full time officer. Was it doable? Yes. Was it difficult? Extremely.
- The AFIS system provided the P.D. with an identity from a partial fingerprint that was "lifted" by Sgt. VanTasel. The person was arrested.
- Reported that a seminar was attended by the Chief and Commissioner Zavisza, who unfortunately, did not find it educational.
- Provided the commission with an updated list of goals, objective and accomplishments. Mr. Quinn said he hoped this report will put an end to the issue of goals and objectives and he would like to commend the Chief and Department. Ms. Stevenson agreed, but did enjoy seeing it in writing.

Chief Manzi wanted to publicly announce that through the Cpl. Steven Bixler Memorial Fund, a second donation was made to the department, by Mr. & Mrs. Bixler, Steven's parents. The Chief wanted to thank the family for their generosity. The donation will be used to provide each officer with smaller, (than the Maglight 3cell rechargeable) but powerful flashlight.

CHAIRMAN COMMENT – None

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

At 8:40, Mr. Zavisza motioned to go into executive session for discussion of personnel. Mr. Joyal seconded. Chief Manzi and Capt. Bourque were present for executive session.

At 9:20, the commission returned to regular session and adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen McKown,

Donald Miner, Chairman

Recording Secretary